



ISOTRETINOIN (AC CUTANE) INFORMATION FOR FEMALES

- If you haven't already, please create your iPledge account. You will need to access the account to answer questions each month prior to filling your prescription. Your iPledge account will have an ID number. You will need that number for the Pharmacy when you fill the prescription.
- If you were prescribed birth control, please start immediately as you will need to be on 2 forms of birth control throughout your treatment course. If you get pregnant while on isotretinoin, your fetus carries a very high risk of severe birth defects. Females must continue birth control for 1 month after taking your last pill. Also, do not share your medication or donate blood during your treatment. You may start trying to get pregnant or donate blood one month after you take your last pill.
- Stop any other acne medications as they can excessively dry out your skin or cause side effects when taken at the same time as Isotretinoin. For a face wash, use only gentle washes such as Epionce Gentle Foaming Cleanser or Milky Lotion Cleanser, Cetaphil Daily Facial Cleanser, or CeraVe Foaming Facial Cleanser.
- You will need to have labs done prior to starting your medication and typically two months after starting the medication. You should be fasting for about 12 hours prior to having your labs done.
- Log into the iPledge system prior to going to the pharmacy each month. You will need to answer questions each month before receiving your prescription. You can only answer the questions after your visit with the dermatologist.
- You must fill your prescription within 7 days of your office visit or it will no longer be valid and you will need to come to our office to repeat a pregnancy test. Make sure and fill your prescription even if you have pills left over from a previous month. If your prescription is being held for lab results, please call us if you are getting near your 7 day window.
- For best results, take your medication with a fatty meal. This helps with the absorption of the medication. If you are supposed to take two pills a day, you may take them at the same time. If you notice increased side effects taking them at the same time, you may split them up and take one pill twice a day.
- The most common side effects of Isotretinoin are dry lips, skin, and eyes. We recommend you carry a lip moisturizer such as Carmex, Vaseline, or Aquaphor Healing Ointment, or Dr. Dan's lip balm with you at all times and use it as often as possible. If nosebleeds become an issue, apply Vaseline to the nostrils using a Q-tip. A nasal saline spray can also be helpful. Good

moisturizers for your face and body include Epionce Renewal Calming Cream, CeraVe, Cetaphil, or other moisturizers advertised as non-comedogenic. Taking a fish oil supplement is also highly recommended (1000 -2000mg daily) as this has been shown to reduce the side effects of dryness and can help with the elevation in triglycerides that can often occur while taking Isotretinoin. This can be purchased over the counter.

- For dry eyes, use Refresh Plus Lubricant Eye Drops - Preservative Free or Systane Ultra Preservative Free Eye Drops. Use of a warm compress 10 minutes a day is also helpful to relieve clogged glands within the eyelids and reduce eye dryness. For this we recommend the Bruder eye mask which can be purchased many places including Amazon.

- Other side effects of Isotretinoin include but are not limited to sun sensitivity (this means you are more likely to get a sunburn, so wear sunscreen!) depression, vision changes, severe headache, liver function test abnormalities, triglyceride elevation, inflammatory bowel disease or other intestinal problems, and joint pains. If you develop any concerning symptoms, stop the medication and call your physician.

- Your acne may get worse after starting Isotretinoin. Many patients do not notice improvement until 3-4 months into treatment. Most patients are free of acne after 6 months of treatment so stick with it even if you are not noticing improvement initially.

- If your medicine costs more than \$80 for a month supply, please let us know as we can usually get it for no more than \$80 if we use a different pharmacy.